



Billing Code: 3510-22-P

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XG029**

**Marine Mammals; File No. 21419**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Shannon Atkinson, Ph.D., University of Alaska Fairbanks, 17101 Point Lena Loop Road, Juneau, AK 99801 has applied in due form for a permit to import, export, and receive marine mammal parts for scientific research.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before [*INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER***].

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the Features box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 21419 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be

submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. Please include the File No. 21419 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on these applications would be appropriate.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jennifer Skidmore or Shasta McClenahan, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR Part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR Parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to receive, import, and export biological samples from pinnipeds and cetaceans annually for scientific research. Marine mammal parts will not exceed 1,000 animals per year within order Cetacea (dolphins, porpoises, and whales) and 1,000 animals per year within order Pinnipedia (seals and sea lions, excluding walrus) with unlimited samples per individual. Secondary to research, marine mammal parts may also be used for educational purposes. Import/export activities would occur world-wide. Sources of samples include U.S. subsistence harvests and stranded animals

in foreign countries. Samples may also be obtained within the United States or abroad from animals held in captivity, authorized researchers or collections, and soft or hard parts that sloughed, excreted, or naturally discharged. No live animals would be harassed or taken, lethally or otherwise, under the requested permit. The requested duration of the permit is 5 years.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the *Federal Register*, NMFS is forwarding a copy of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: February 15, 2018.

**Julia Harrison,**

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,*

*Office of Protected Resources,*

*National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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